However, to combat illiteracy the Communists also see the immediate need of simplifying the Chinese written language. In this regard the government policy is based on Mao Tse-tung's statement in his On New Democracy that, "under certain conditions, the written language of China must be reformed."[2] Envisaged as an ultimate goal of language reform is the complete Latinization of the Chinese written language. In other words, the characters will be replaced by the Latin alphabet. Communist promoters of Latinization often cite Lenin's pronouncement that "Latinization is the great revolution of the East,"[3] to substantiate their argument.

The Communists are trying to cultivate a politically conscious proletariat in China; China's spoken language, as reflected in songs, plays, and speeches, is becoming more proletarian and drifting away from the set phrases and expressions traditionally used by the intellectual class. Extensive use of professional jargon and local expressions is the vogue of the day. Political terms and scientific terms, particularly those of Russian origin, are apparently on the lips of every Chinese who has had Communist indoctrination. It must be noted that the Communists, in adopting many new terms heretofore unfamiliar to the average Chinese, are aware of the danger of corrupting their language. The People's Daily of Peking (the Pravda of China), in an editorial on June 6, 1951, urged the

2. Mao Tse-tung, Mao Tse-tung Hsüan-chi, [Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung], Vol. II, Peking, Jen-min ch'u-pan-she, 1952, p. 680.

3. John de Francis, Nationalism and Language Reform in China, Princeton University Press, 1950, p. 90.

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use of correct Chinese and stressed the need for the study of grammar so that "the Chinese language will not become corrupt and impure."[4] 191 185

In the movement to eradicate illiteracy, the current trend is to promote accelerated methods of language teaching and to standardize and formalize many simplified characters already used by the people in handwriting. The Peking government, however, is applying little effort to the popularization of Latinized Chinese. One of the most publicized methods to accelerate language learning was introduced in 1948 by Ch'i Chien-hua, a cultural cadre attached to the armed forces. Ch'i champions the use of the "National Phonetic Symbols" (not to be confused with the Gwoyeu Romatzyh discussed in foregoing sections of this chapter) as the "walking stick" for new learners. The phonetic symbols are employed as an aid to pronunciation. This method was said to be so successful that the Peking government in May 1952 recognized Ch'i's contribution by inviting him to the capital and awarding him a citation.[5] 212 185

Simplification of written characters has received official blessing. When the Committee on the Study of Language Reform under the Ministry of Education compiled 798 such simplified characters and recommended that they be adopted, the recommendation was given immediate attention. On May 1, 1955, the committee announced that 57 of the simplified characters would be adopted by six national periodicals for experimental purposes.[6] On October 15, 1955, an All-China Conference on Language Reform was

4. Quoted in Jen-min Chiao-yu [People's Education], (Monthly), Peking, March 1955, p. 28.

5. [People's Education], May 1952, p. 4.

6. Hua-ch'iao Jih-pao [China Daily News], New York, May 2, 1955, p. 1.

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their own written scripts. The theory is that these people must first be given their own languages; then it will be easier for them to learn Chinese (Latinized Chinese, most probably). In Central-South China, a script is being developed for the Chuang Minority Nationals in Kwangsi Province.[10] These newly created scripts are based on the Latin alphabet.

XI. SPEAKERS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Before 1949, the use of foreign languages, mainly English, was found in a few large port cities in Central-South China such as Canton and Hankow. Contact with English-speaking people in such cities and inclusion of English in school curricula accounted for the popularity of English. However, with the exception of a few foreign missionary schools in which English was emphasized and taught by native speakers, instruction in English in other schools did not amount to much. This was true even of the colleges of the region. Although some college students could read a publication in English with reasonable ease, they could hardly converse in it. On the average, it may be safely assumed that no more than one-tenth of the secondary school graduates and no more than one-third of the college graduates could, with some difficulty, read English. The over-all percentages of those who could speak it would be even smaller.

The Communist policy is to discourage the use of English or any other Western language except for advanced specialized studies. But as late as 1953,[11]

10. Survey of China Mainland Press, No. 1068, Hong Kong, American Consulate-General, June 14, 1955, p. 1.

11. I-chiu-wu-ssu-nien T'ou-k'ao Ta-hsüeh Chih-tao, Guide to Taking College Entrance Examinations in 1954, Hong Kong, Hsueh-sheng shu-tien, 1954, pp. 98-100.

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knowledge of simple English was still required for enrollment in colleges. It appears reasonable to assume that the number of senior middle school (secondary school) and college students able to read or speak English has not changed. Foreign language instruction has been eliminated from junior middle school and primary school curricula.[12] Although the study of Russian has been encouraged by the Communists, it is doubtful if much has been achieved during the past five years.

There is no statistical information on the number of people able to read or speak English in Central-South China, but if the curricula for senior middle schools and colleges are any indication, then there could not possibly be more than 50,000 with this ability.[13] As to the number of people in this region who can speak or read other Western languages, there is even less information to serve as a basis for conjecture.

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12. Wu-nien-lai Ti Kung-fei Chiao-yü Kung-tso [Communist Education in the Past Five Years], Taipei, Sixth Section, Central Committee, Nationalist Party, 1955, p. 16.

13. The total number of senior middle school graduates in China from 1949 to 1953 was 216,000. It is believed that of this number no more than one-fourth could be in this region. People's Handbook, 1955, pp. 571-73.

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College and the Kwangsi Minority National College, most of the primary schools included in Communist statistics are presumably poorly equipped and operated on an irregular schedule. 871 563

V. SOME OBSERVATIONS

A. The Character of the Communist Education

Two significant characteristics of the Communist educational system are the degree of specialization found in the school system and the centralization of control over the content of the subjects taught in the schools. The measures so far adopted by the Communists in reorganizing the schools, with emphasis on the development of technical institutions, are measures of expediency in view of the urgency of economic reconstruction as outlined in the first Five-year Plan. The centralization of control begins with the indoctrination of the teachers and rigid supervision of the publication of textbooks. Every teacher is told what to say and how to say it. To be sure the Communists have yet to achieve complete uniformity in education, but all possible efforts are made to guard against deviation. 871

B. Ideological Orientation and Its Effect on the People's Attitudes

The ideological orientation of the Communist educational system can be readily seen from the basic policies and the major movements instituted in Chinese education during the past five years. Through "education" the Communists expect to teach 876 191

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the Chinese people to hate "American imperialism" and to respect the Soviet Union as "the leader in the revolutionary bloc of nations." The social sciences taught in schools are oriented on the basis of Russian socialism "because China must learn from the Russian revolutionary experiences." In technical courses Russian technique is singled out as "advanced experience". Hostility toward all non-Communist traditions and ideals is stressed throughout the country. Any person, Chinese or foreign, who is not sympathetic toward Communism is assumed to be either an actual or a potential enemy, and is to be treated as such.

There is a lack of subtlety in the Chinese Communists' attempt to reconcile their theory of patriotism with their pro-Russian propaganda line. When they directed the teachers to abandon the use of English except in foreign language classes, they defended this by saying that Russia would be taught in certain schools in order to expedite the process of translating certain Russian works into Chinese, but that even this practice would be terminated as soon as the goal was attained.[72] But they failed to specify the time when such practices would cease. Since learning a foreign language is no easy matter, such a substitution of Russian for English has been a controversial point and may remain an unresolved issue of the Communist ideological orientation in education.

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72. People's Education, February 1952, p. 7.